News Release

Communications New Brunswick

New Brunswick Human Rights Commission

Statement marking Disability Awareness Week (08/05/27)

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FREDERICTON (CNB) - The following statement has been issued by New Brunswick Human Rights Commission chair Gordon Porter to mark Disability Awareness Week.

"Disability Awareness Week starts on June 1 this year, and its theme is: Disability Supports Create Self-Sufficiency.

"Disability supports are goods and services, such as wheelchairs, teaching materials or personal support from a person, that help people with disabilities to overcome the barriers they face.

"Complaints alleging discrimination based on physical or mental disability are the most common complaints received by the Human Rights Commission; they constitute nearly half of our caseload. Many of these cases concern the failure to accommodate - that is, to eliminate the barriers faced by people with a disability.

"In recent years, the commission has focused its educational activities on accommodating people with a disability. Last October we published a guideline about the legal requirement to accommodate students with a disability. The commission has also published a guideline on accommodation of disability in employment. Both guidelines are available on our website.

"One of the points stressed in the guideline on accommodating students with a disability is the importance of providing supports so that the student can remain in regular classrooms. These supports can take various forms, such as personal care by a teacher assistant, scent-free policies, accessible educational materials, and assistive technology.

"During Disability Awareness Week, I invite New Brunswickers to consider what we can do to provide the supports that people with disabilities need so that they can live independently, and fully participate in society."

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